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Framing the European Integration Process: Country-, Party- or Issue-Specific?

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Abstract: This paper proposes to study how the European integration process is framed. Such an analysis helps us better understand how the European Union is perceived and which arguments are mobilized to support or oppose it. We will test a series of hypotheses that have so far only been tested in individual countries. Drawing on Habermas' typology of pragmatic-, identity- and value-related arguments we provide sophisticated frame categorizations to capture the complex structure of argumentation and to go beyond a simple dichotomization of economic and cul-tural frames. Relaying on a large media dataset for the period from 2004 to 2006 in six Western European countries we not only look at how political actors argue, but also whether framing strategies vary across countries and issues that are debated. We will come to the conclusion that the way the European Union is perceived de-pends a lot on the actors that are involved in the debate and the issues that are at stake.

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Table 4: Framing by issues (percentages)

	<i>EU-integ. in general</i>	<i>Constit. Treaty</i>	<i>Enlarge- ment</i>	<i>Monetry union</i>	<i>Market liberaliz.</i>	<i>Regul. capitalism</i>	<i>Budget. framework</i>	<i>Bilat. Treaties</i>	<i>Free mov. of persons</i>	<i>Security (Schen- gen)</i>	<i>Other Issues</i>
Political	26	33	36	29	13	22	35	36	14	24	42
Economic	21	23	12	63	72	51	24	38	74	18	16
Other pragmatic	7	3	9	0	0	5	0	5	3	22	3
Cultural	46	41	42	8	15	22	41	21	9	36	39
<i>National- exclusive</i>	8	6	9	0	3	2	1	0	4	4	4
<i>National- institutional</i>	13	7	2	2	3	5	1	4	1	9	9
<i>Multicultural- inclusive</i>	8	8	8	3	1	5	24	2	1	7	6
<i>Moral- universalist</i>	16	20	23	3	7	11	15	15	2	16	20
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	762	2'661	3'511	884	492	762	417	372	664	649	517

Table 5: Framing by supporters/opponents and political parties (percentages)

	<i>Positive</i>	<i>Negative</i>	<i>Radical-left</i>	<i>Greens</i>	<i>Social democrats</i>	<i>Liberals</i>	<i>Conservatives</i>	<i>Right-wing populists</i>
Political	32	29	16	36	33	35	38	14
Economic	27	34	50	6	33	20	21	30
Other pragmatic	10	3	2	22	7	7	5	9
Cultural	31	34	33	37	28	38	36	47
<i>National-exclusive</i>	3	8	0	3	2	5	7	16
<i>National-institutional</i>	3	9	11	4	4	7	6	22
<i>Multicultural-inclusive</i>	8	4	1	4	6	10	8	2
<i>Moral-universalist</i>	17	14	21	26	16	16	15	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Positions</i>			<i>-0.54</i>	<i>0.48</i>	<i>0.43</i>	<i>0.45</i>	<i>0.07</i>	<i>-0.54</i>
N	6'565	4'476	151	281	1'849	594	2'435	524

Notes: All categories have been weighted by country-weights. The categories 'positive' and 'negative' include all actors present in the debate (not only political parties). The indicator 'positions' varies between '-1' and '1'.

The party-families consist of the following parties:

Radical left: PCF, LCR, LO (F); PDS, Die Linke (D); SP (NL); PdA (CH)

Greens: Die Grünen (A); Les verts (F); Die Grünen (D); Groen Links (NL); GPS (CH)

Social-democrats: SPÖ (A); Labour (GB); PSF, MDC/MRC, MRG/PRG (F); SPD (D); PvdA (NL); SPS (CH)

Liberals: Liberales Forum (A); LDP (GB); UDF (F); FDP (D); D66, VVD (NL); FDP, LPS (CH)

Conservatives: ÖVP (A); Conservative Party (GB); UMP, RPR, RPF (F); CDU/CSU (D); CDA (NL); CVP (CH)

Right-wing populists: FPÖ (A); FN, MNR, MPF (F); LPF, PVV (NL); SVP (CH)

Table 6: Framing by parties and countries (percentages)

	<i>Austria</i>	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>France</i>		<i>Germany</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>		<i>Switzerland</i>	
	<i>T</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>RWP</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>RWP</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>RWP</i>
Political	30	31	19	16	38	36	16	21	13
Economic	31	30	39	14	29	17	12	46	51
Other pragmatic	9	7	2.0	8	9	7	15	11	12
Cultural	30	32	41	63	25	40	57	22	25
<i>National-exclusive</i>	7	5	7	37	6	5	22	3	6
<i>National-institutional</i>	7	10	4	17	0	8	15	7	13
<i>Multicultural-inclusive</i>	3	3	10	0	6	9	13	1	0
<i>Moral-universalist</i>	12	15	19	9	12	18	7	11	5
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N	323	389	2'172	142	340	1'396	68	1'278	236

Notes: 'T' includes all frames used by political parties in the respective countries and 'RWP' those of right-wing populists. In Austria, the United Kingdom and Germany the number of frames used by right-wing populists was too small to make relevant statements. Only frames used by national political actors have been included.

Table 7: Framing by parties and issue-clusters (percentages)

	<i>Radical-left</i>		<i>Greens</i>		<i>Social democrats</i>		<i>Liberals</i>		<i>Conservatives</i>		<i>Right-wing populists</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>e</i>
Political	18	9	39	11	39	19	38	33	42	27	14	12	38	21
Economic	52	61	4	37	21	60	13	45	15	60	16	64	17	59
Other prag.	0	8	25	16	5	6	3	1	5	2	6	6	6	5
Cultural	30	23	33	36	35	15	45	22	39	11	64	19	39	15
<i>National-exclusive</i>	0	0	3	0	2	1	5	5	8	4	21	13	6	3
<i>National-institutional</i>	9	10	2	9	4	2	8	3	6	3	30	6	7	3
<i>Multicultural-inclusive</i>	1	0	4	0	9	1	13	2	9	1	2	0	8	1
<i>Moral-universalist</i>	20	13	24	28	19	11	20	11	16	3	11	0	18	8
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Positions</i>	-0.62	-0.43	0.48	0.12	0.32	-0.30	0.31	0.60	0.08	0.06	-0.83	-0.15		
N	59	27	257	25	1'237	619	275	69	1'844	324	253	125	3'925	1'188
N in %	2	2	7	2	32	52	7	6	47	27	6	11	100	100

Notes: The absolute numbers of negative and positive positions does not equal the overall number of frames as there are some neutral positions that have been excluded from the analyses. All categories have been weighted by country-weights. The indicator 'positions' varies between '-1' and '1'. The differently framed issues (d) include the issues enlargement, bilateral treaties, budgetary framework, constitutional treaty and EU-Integration in general. The economically framed issues (e) consist of the issues free movement of persons, market liberalization, regulated capitalism and monetary union. The issue categories "security" and "other" have been excluded from this analysis.